

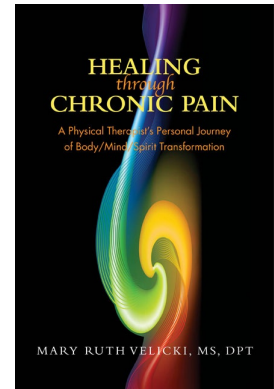
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 22, 2013 | Los Angeles, CA

A PHYSICAL THERAPIST SHARES HER PERSONAL HEALING FROM CHRONIC PAIN *A MEMOIR FILLED WITH HOPE AND CONCRETE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES*

Healing Through Chronic Pain bridges the gap between clinician and patient and between western, eastern and alternative sides of medicine to provide inspiration and support for people with chronic pain.

Mary Ruth Velicki, a physical therapist and university instructor, endured intense, debilitating pelvic pain for years. Determined to get better, she set aside her initial skepticism and tried a plethora of treatments from the Western, Eastern, and alternative sides of medicine. To her surprise, she underwent incredible healing that extended beyond her physical body to her full person and experienced many direct connections between her body, mind, and spirit. In *Healing Through Chronic Pain*, Mary Ruth recounts her five and a half-year journey of “healing through the layers” and personal transformation. Along the way, she shares the treatment strategies she used and the support she received from a team of professionals to move past the pain and to heal her whole being.



“Mary Ruth relates her honest and successful struggle with chronic pelvic pain in an easy to read and engrossing fashion. Her methods to recover a normal pain free life will help readers more than any pharmaceutical or ED visit. This is a MUST READ for anyone with chronic pain or interstitial cystitis.”

— *Carolyn Sachs MD, MPH. Clinical Professor, Emergency Medicine, University of California–Los Angeles*

Author Credentials:

Mary Ruth Velicki, MS, DPT, has been a physical therapist for over thirty years. Throughout her career, she has specialized in the rehabilitation of adults with neurological disorders. She spent eight years developing and teaching graduate courses for several universities, and she has published research in the journal *Experimental Brain Research*. After working diligently for years to recover from her own chronic pelvic pain, she now spends her time writing, speaking, and working with clients using a combination of physical therapy and alternative treatments.

Visit <http://healingthroughchronicpain.com> for contact details, media copies, and photos.

BOOK INFORMATION

Healing Through Chronic Pain: A Physical Therapist's Personal Journey of Body/Mind/Spirit Transformation

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Available through Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com, and most ebook formats.

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A SKEPTICAL PHYSICAL THERAPIST EXPERIENCES HOLISTIC HEALING *DIRECT EXPERIENCES OF THE BODY/MIND/SPIRIT CONNECTION*

The memoir, *Healing Through Chronic Pain*, includes fresh insights about the body/mind/spirit connection and healing as well as inspiration and concrete support for people with chronic pain.

Mary Ruth Velicki, a physical therapist and university instructor, endured intense, debilitating pelvic pain for years. Determined to get better, she set aside her initial skepticism and tried a plethora of treatments from the Western, Eastern, and alternative sides of medicine. To her surprise, she underwent incredible healing that extended beyond her physical body to her full person and experienced many direct connections between her body, mind, and spirit. In *Healing Through Chronic Pain*, Mary Ruth recounts her five and a half-year journey of “healing through the layers” and personal transformation.

"Healing Through Chronic Pain is an artful memoir of personal transformation, the well-written record of an intensely personal path toward healing, and the discovery that pain and suffering are different. I recommend this book highly."

—Carol M. Davis, DPT, EdD, MS, FAPTA, Professor Emerita, Department of Physical Therapy, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine

Author Credentials:

Mary Ruth Velicki, MS, DPT, has been a physical therapist for over thirty years. Throughout her career, she has specialized in the rehabilitation of adults with neurological disorders. She spent eight years developing and teaching graduate courses for several universities, and she has published research in the journal *Experimental Brain Research*. After working diligently for years to recover from her own chronic pelvic pain, she now spends her time writing, speaking, and working with clients using a combination of physical therapy and alternative treatments.

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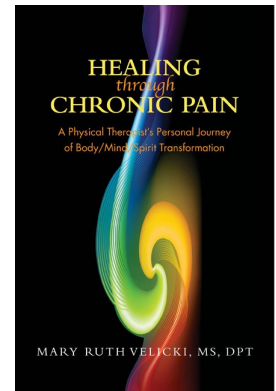
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Synopsis

Healing Through Chronic Pain

A Physical Therapist's Personal Journey of Body/Mind/Spirit Transformation

Mary Ruth Velicki, a physical therapist and university instructor, endured intense, debilitating pelvic pain for years. Determined to get better, she set aside her initial skepticism and tried a plethora of treatments from the Western, Eastern, and alternative sides of medicine. To her surprise, she underwent incredible healing that extended beyond her physical body to her full person and experienced many direct connections between her body, mind, and spirit. In *Healing Through Chronic Pain*, Mary Ruth recounts her five-year journey of “healing through the layers” and personal transformation. Along the way, she shares the treatment strategies she used and the support she received from a team of professionals to move past the pain and to heal her whole being.

Author Biography

Healing Through Chronic Pain

A Physical Therapist's Personal Journey of Body/Mind/Spirit Transformation

Mary Ruth Velicki, MS, DPT, has been a physical therapist for almost thirty years. Throughout her career, she has specialized in the rehabilitation of adults with neurological disorders. She spent eight years developing and teaching graduate courses for several universities, and she has published research in the journal *Experimental Brain Research*. After working diligently for years to recover from her own chronic pelvic pain, she now spends her time writing, speaking, and working with clients using a combination of physical therapy and alternative treatments.

Testimonials

Healing Through Chronic Pain

A Physical Therapist's Personal Journey of Body/Mind/Spirit Transformation

Clinicians

“This well-written story outlines [Mary Ruth] Velicki’s personal journey to find healing from debilitating pelvic pain. As a trained physical therapist suffering from a chronic condition, Velicki’s unique background allows her to bridge the gap of misunderstanding that often exists between clinician and patient. For clinicians, the book provides an honest look into the daily struggles of a patient. For those who suffer from pelvic pain, this book will be a beacon of hope, comforting those who thought they were alone in their experience, providing encouragement and resources for all who search for healing of mind, body, and spirit.”

— **Jocelyn B. Craig, MD, Assistant Professor, Urogynecology and Female Pelvic Medicine, University of California–Irvine**

“Mary Ruth relates her honest and successful struggle with chronic pelvic pain in an easy to read and engrossing fashion. The key to her success is the fact that she took control of her condition and took the responsibility upon herself of getting well rather than expecting the traditional medical model to "cure her". Her methods to recover a normal pain free life will help readers more than any pharmaceutical or ED visit. I have referred many patients to Mary Ruth's work in the hopes of providing real help for recovery. This is a MUST READ for anyone with chronic pain or interstitial cystitis.”

— **Carolyn Sachs MD, MPH. Clinical Professor, Emergency Medicine, University of California–Los Angeles**

"Healing Through Chronic Pain is an artful memoir of personal transformation, the well- written record of an intensely personal path toward healing, and the discovery that pain and suffering are different. Mary Ruth Velicki remembers for us all how the healing path is an intensely personal journey that has a way of its own, that often stops us in our tracks and more than encourages us, forces us to examine our lives, our way of being in the world, and serendipitously leads us to choices that once we would never have dreamed making. These choices, unbeknownst to us previously, eventually lead us to hope, and the healing of more than the body's pain, the healing of the soul and spirit as well. We are changed. I recommend this book highly."

—**Carol M. Davis, DPT, EdD, MS, FAPTA, Professor Emerita, Department of Physical Therapy, Miller School of Medicine, University of Miami**

"An honest look at the challenges of healing chronic pain. Ms.Velicki takes us on a journey where grief, pain, and embarrassment transform into compassion, self-acceptance, and hope."

— **Dustienne Miller PT, MS, WCS, CYT, Physical Therapist, Women’s Clinical Specialist, Author of: Your Pace Yoga-Relieving Pelvic Pain**

“Mary Ruth’s story is a beautiful testament to the resiliency of the human spirit and the ability of the body to heal itself from the inside out. Her book gives all sufferers of chronic pain hope and proven tools to reverse the cycle of dysfunction. It also presents a strong case for the integration of traditional and alternative therapies in the treatment of any chronic illness or disease.”

— **Karen Axelrod, CMT/Diplomate-Certified CranioSacral Therapist**

“I thought you or your patients might be interested in a new book, Healing through Chronic Pain, that has just been published. I feel it would be inspirational to your patients. It chronicles Dr. Mary Ruth Velicki’s journey and trials and tribulations with chronic pain and her successful recovery. To her surprise she underwent incredible healing that extended beyond her physical body as she experienced the direct connections between her body, mind and spirit. You may be particularly interested in Chapter 11: Treating the Mind, Body, Spirit, where she describes Myofascial Release from her perspective of a patient and that of a therapist.”

— **John F. Barnes PT (written to therapists practicing the John F. Barnes Myofascial Release Approach)**

Testimonials

Healing Through Chronic Pain

A Physical Therapist's Personal Journey of Body/Mind/Spirit Transformation

Readers with Chronic Pain

“As someone who changed her career from being a science, hard facts based engineer, to a Myofascial Release Therapist and also dealing with chronic low back pain, I am so happy that Mary Ruth wrote this book. She very clearly describes the transition from closed-minded western medicine to an awakening awareness of her own belief systems and how her pain led her on a journey to true self-discovery. A must read for anyone dealing with chronic pain, Mary Ruth tells her story in terms that anyone can understand and imparts a sincerity that is immediately credible. This book makes me feel like I am not alone in my journey, especially the realizations she makes about the pain going and coming in cycles and learning how to trust it and use it, rather than fear it. She describes Myofascial Unwinding in an approachable way that makes it easy for clients to make the leap necessary in their minds to being to contemplate a new way of healing. I have decided that her book should be recommended reading for all of my clients with chronic pain.”

— **Nicole Russo BS, LMT**

“Recently read your wonderful book. I can't tell you how helpful it was as I begin my own journey with the pain clinic. Thank you for your bravery, honesty and compassion.”

— **Annie Buchanan**

“I can relate to Ms. Velicki's book because I suffer from IC and a pelvic disorder myself and I had to leave my job and go on disability. The pain is insurmountable. You wouldn't believe it unless you felt it yourself. When you read Ms. Velicki's book you don't feel alone in your pain. You find as time goes on you come into contact with people who 'get it' because they've 'been there'.”

— **Lynne LaBianca**

“Great book describing a woman's journey about healing by moving away from traditional scientific thinking to understanding the body as a whole (mind, body, and spirit) and how that led to relief from chronic pain. I've been through a very similar journey (just pain on a different location) and she hits everything spot on. I'd recommend this for anyone dealing with chronic pain.”

—**Hollywood (as written on Amazon.com)**

Readers without Chronic Pain

“Even though I do not suffer from chronic pain, the mind, body, spirit connection discussion was helpful on different levels. Mary Ruth's life story is a good read on its own as her journey through life and pain is a very human tale. I recommend this book to people who are ready to take the next step up in their spiritual journey.”

— **Diane Julian**

“Mary Ruth Velicki has provided an intensely personal and powerful story of her own journey from painful physical and psychological misery and despair to a nearly pain-free state, but the transformation and its many routes and detours are fascinating. A captivating story of persevering, healing, and hope!”

— **Steve Fuller**

“Although about chronic physical pain, this book and the insights that Mary Ruth gives to us helps along the path of all pain...be it temporary but debilitating like hip, knee or back or 'chronic' in the sense of soul/heart pain. I have bought copies for several of my friends and family to help them along life in general...which we know always carries some pain. Thank you Mary Ruth Velicki!”

— **Leonita Sianez**

“Mary Ruth Velicki's story is inspirational and provides hope for pain sufferers. She aptly relays her struggles on her journey to a pain free world - it is detailed and enlightening. She provides several avenues of treatments and resources. I admire her persistence, strength and courage.”

—**Ann Breeden**

Suggested Discussion Topics
With Mary Ruth Velicki MS, DPT
Author of *Healing Through Chronic Pain: A Physical Therapist's Personal Journey of Body/Mind/Spirit Transformation*

Healing Through Chronic Pain: Qs & As

Q: What is your book about?

A: In *Healing Through Chronic Pain*, I recount my five-year journey to heal from debilitating pelvic pain (painful bladder syndrome). I was working as a physical therapist and university instructor when the pain pulled me out of my regular life. Determined to get better, I set aside my initial skepticism and tried a plethora of treatments from Western, Eastern, and alternative sides of medicine. To my surprise, I underwent incredible healing that extended beyond my physical body to my full person and experienced many direct connections between my body, mind, and spirit. Much to my surprise, the suffering was actually a gift. Comparing my life and the state of my body, mind, and spirit before my illness to now, I would never want to go back. The journey was rocky, but the rewards were unexpected and amazing.

Q: Who are your readers?

A: This memoir appeals to people who are interested in the healing process and the body/mind/spirit connection. The book has received positive reviews from doctors, therapists and alternative health care providers as well as people suffering from chronic pain. Some of the best book reviews have come from people who do not have physical pain who relate to the deeply human experience of painful challenge and personal transformation.

Q: What makes this memoir valuable or interesting?

A: There are several reasons why this memoir has captured the attention of readers:

- My professional background and healing experiences help to bridge the gap that often exists between clinician and patient.
- In the book, I start out as a skeptical, western-medicine trained physical therapist and end up trying a plethora of treatments from Eastern and alternative sides of medicine. These experiences may expose other clinicians and patients to new viewpoints and treatments.
- This book presents many direct experiences of the body/mind/spirit connection, which may challenge and expand common perceptions of healing.
- For people who are suffering with chronic pain, this book provides inspiration, support and hope.

Q: How can a story about pain be uplifting?

A: This fire of suffering transformed both my internal and external life in amazing and positive ways. In my case, the challenge of chronic pain pushed me look within- not to blame myself for the condition- but to transform underlying trauma, shame and fear into loving self-acceptance. I experienced tremendous post-traumatic growth, and my story is an example of how adversity can become a powerful catalyst for personal healing.

Q: Why did you decide to write this book?

A: At the start of my illness, I began writing a guide on how to physically manage chronic pelvic pain. Having a reason for going through the pain made it easier to endure, and writing was a natural extension of my career as a physical therapist and university instructor. But then this journey became about much more than just relieving my physical pain and writing a book to help others manage their chronic pain.

Over time, I realized that my illness created challenges and changes for my mind and spirit as well as for my body. I came to understand that all three aspects of my person—body, mind, and spirit—are interconnected pieces of this healing puzzle. Taking this holistic approach to my illness ultimately played an integral role in my healing, so I decided to write about all aspects of my experience.

Q: What medical condition caused your chronic pain?

A: My main symptoms were bladder pain and inflammation, pelvic floor dysfunction, and a nervous system in over drive. Many diagnoses have been used to label these symptoms including: interstitial cystitis (IC), painful bladder syndrome (PBS), and chronic pelvic pain syndrome (CPPS). I was also diagnosed with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and found out that many people with IC/PBS have additional conditions such as: IBS, fibromyalgia or chronic fatigue syndrome.

Knowing the diagnostic labels for my condition wasn't as helpful as it might have been for illnesses having a well-defined pathology and researched treatments. IC/PBS is poorly understood and often debilitating, and the type and severity of symptoms varies greatly between people and even in each individual over time.

Q: How prevalent is IC/PBS?

A: IC/PBS is widespread and under-diagnosed. It is estimated that 3-8 million women (3-7%) over the age of 18 in the United States have symptoms of IC/PBS. Of these women, only 10% have a diagnosis of IC/PBS, even though the severity and impact of their symptoms is similar to those with an established diagnosis.¹ A recent study shows that the incidence of IC symptoms among men approaches that of women, indicating that the condition may also be under diagnosed in American men.²

1. Berry, S.H., Elliott, M.N., Suttrop, M., et al. (2011). Prevalence of symptoms of bladder pain syndrome/interstitial cystitis among adult females in the United States. *Journal of Urology*, 186(2), 540-544.
2. Suskind, A.M., Berry, S.H., Ewing, B.A., et al. (2013). The prevalence and overlap of interstitial cystitis/bladder pain syndrome and chronic prostatitis/chronic pelvic pain syndrome in men: results of the RAND interstitial cystitis epidemiology male study. *Journal of Urology*, 189(1), 141-145.

Q: How can your book help people in pain?

A: One of the main reasons I wrote this book was to provide connection, support, and hope to others who are dealing with chronic pain- especially those who also have conditions that are complex and multi-faceted like painful bladder syndrome (PBS) and fibromyalgia.

There are several reason why I thought my perspective may be useful:

- My background as a physical therapist and university instructor helped me to look at my condition in an analytical way and to communicate effectively with members of my care team. In the book, I share the personal strategies I adopted to get through the challenge of living for years with chronic pain.
- I tried numerous treatments from Western, Eastern, and alternative sides of medicine, and my experiences may help introduce others to treatment options they had not previously considered.
- I worked with a group of very experienced and skilled professionals. One of the biggest reasons I felt compelled to write this book was to share their helpful wisdom with others who are in pain.
- When I was in the depths of pain and despair, hearing the stories of other people with my condition helped me feel less isolated and lonely, and when I read that they improved over time, I also felt some hope. For me, feelings of connection and hope calmed my body/mind and helped me to heal.

Q: What is the one thing that cured your condition?

A: In my case, healing my chronic pelvic pain was not a simple task. In order to get better I used a combination of methods from Western medicine, Eastern medicine, and alternative treatments that addressed all aspects of my person—body, mind, and spirit. There was no quick fix or cure and the healing happened gradually over time at all levels of my being.

For me, it was important to appreciate that this condition affected many systems in my body (urogenital, musculoskeletal, neurological), and I needed to work on all of them. It was also crucial to be open to the idea that there may be an emotional component to my illness. Over the years I worked hard to uncover beliefs, thought patterns and past trauma that may have contributed to the ramp-up of my nervous system. Once I became conscious of these stressors, I could address them, and this helped to calm down both my body and my mind. Working at the mind and body level simultaneously was crucial for my healing.

Q: How has this experience changed your perspective as a physical therapist?

A: Before my illness, I viewed the body as a machine that would occasionally break down and therapists and doctors as mechanics who hopefully had enough knowledge and skill to fix the problems. Now I see the body as a living, adaptive organism with innate healing mechanisms. This perspective gave me hope when I was in pain because if the body is reactive and malleable, there is possibility for change and healing.

Before my journey through chronic pain, my focus as a physical therapist was almost solely on the body, but now I have directly experienced the body/mind/spirit connection. My work now combines my physical therapy knowledge with complementary treatments that aim to calm the nervous system and promote healing.

Possible Articles/ Media Segments

A Physical Therapist Shares Her Personal Healing from Chronic Pelvic Pain

A Skeptical Physical Therapist Experiences Holistic Healing

A Physical Therapist Provides Support and Inspiration for People with Pelvic Pain

A Physical Therapist's Personal Experiences of the Mind-Body-Spirit Connection

Post Traumatic Growth: How Chronic Pain Became a Catalyst for Transformation

The Patient Care Dynamic: Experiences From Both Sides of the Treatment Table

Experiencing the Multi-Factorial Nature of Painful Bladder Syndrome

Healing Through Chronic Pain: A Physical Therapist's Personal Strategies to Calm the Body/Mind

Healing Through Chronic Pain: A Physical Therapist's Personal Communication Strategies

Healing Through Chronic Pain: A Physical Therapist's Personal Strategies to Take Control

Healing Through Chronic Pain: A Physical Therapist's Personal Strategies to Maintain Hope